

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 are all the claims pending in the application. Claim 6 has been amended for purposes of clarity. Entry of the above amendments is respectfully requested.

In addition, Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 1, 2, 4, and 7 are allowed.

I. Response to Objection of Claims 3, 5, and 6

Claims 3, 5 and 6 are objected to as failing to further limit a previous claim.

Applicants respectfully traverse and submit that claims 3, 5 and 6 further limit claim 1, from which they depend for the reasons discussed below. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

II. Response to Rejection of Claims 3, 5, and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Claims 3, 5, and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite.

Basically, the Examiner asserts that it is unclear how the concentration recited in claim 3 relates to the concentration in claim 1. Regarding claims 5 and 6, the Examiner asserts that the claims recite multiple concentrations of emulsifier and causes ambiguity when read in view of claim 1.

Applicants respectfully traverse and submit that claims 3, 5 and 6 are clear and definite.

Claim 1 recites "...wherein in a surface portion of the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer within the range of up to 3 nm inward from the outer face of the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer, (B) an anionic emulsifier containing a sulfur atom is contained in a proportion of from 0.1 to 3 parts by weight based on 100 parts by weight of the whole of the monomer components constituting the acrylic polymer (A) that forms the surface portion of the pressure-sensitive

adhesive layer, wherein the concentration of the anionic emulsifier (B) containing a sulfur atom is increased inward from the surface....”

Thus, claim 1 recites the amount of anionic emulsifier within the surface portion (i.e., within up to 3 nm from the outer surface) of the PSA layer based on 100 parts by weight of the acrylic polymer (A) in the surface portion of the PSA layer. *See e.g.*, Attachment.

Claim 3 recites “...wherein the proportion of the anionic emulsifier (B) containing a sulfur atom in the whole of the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer is from 0.5 to 5 parts by weight based on 100 parts by weight of the whole of the monomer components constituting the acrylic polymer (A) according to the aqueous dispersion pressure-sensitive adhesive composition of the whole of the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer”.

Thus, claim 3 is directed to an embodiment where the amount of anionic emulsifier within the surface portion (i.e., within up to 3 nm from the outer surface) of the PSA layer based on 100 parts by weight of the acrylic polymer (A) in the surface portion of the PSA layer and the total amount of anionic emulsifier in the PSA layer forming aqueous dispersion is 0.5-5 parts by weight based on 100 parts by weight of the monomers constituting the acrylic polymer (A). *See e.g.*, Attachment. That is, claim 3 further defines the total amount of anionic emulsifier in the entire PSA layer, including the surface portion (i.e., portion up to 3 μ m from the outer surface). Accordingly, claim 3 is consistent with claim 1 and further limits claim 1.

Claim 5 recites “the pressure-sensitive adhesive tape or sheet according to claim 1, wherein the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer on one side of the substrate has a multilayered structure; an outermost layer of the multilayered pressure-sensitive adhesive layer has a thickness of from 1 to 5 μ m and contains the anionic emulsifier (B) containing a sulfur atom in a proportion of from 0.1 to 3 parts by weight based on 100 parts by weight of the whole of the monomer components constituting the acrylic polymer (A) that forms the outermost layer of the

multilayered pressure-sensitive adhesive layer; and the multilayered pressure-sensitive adhesive layer, as a whole, contains (i) the anionic emulsifier (B) containing a sulfur atom in a proportion of from 0.5 to 5 parts by weight based on 100 parts by weight of the whole of the monomer components constituting the acrylic polymer (A) that forms the multilayered pressure-sensitive adhesive layer...".

Thus, claim 5 is directed to an embodiment where up to 3 nm of the surface portion of the outermost PSA layer (which has a thickness of 1 to 5 μm) contains 0.1 to 3 parts by weight of the emulsifier based on 100 parts by weight of the monomer components constituting the acrylic monomer (A) in the outermost layer, and where the amount of emulsifier in all of the PSA layers is 0.5 to 5 parts by weight based on 100 parts by weight of the whole of the monomer components constituting the acrylic polymer (A). *See e.g.*, Attachment. That is, claim 5 further defines the amount of anionic emulsifier in a thickness of 1 to 5 μm from the outer surface (which includes the surface portion of up to 3 nm) and further defines the the total amount of anionic emulsifier in the entire PSA layer. Accordingly, claim 5 is consistent with claim 1 and further limits claim 1.

Claim 6 recites "the pressure-sensitive adhesive tape or sheet according to claim 1, wherein the pressure-sensitive adhesive layer is formed of the aqueous dispersion pressure-sensitive adhesive composition containing the anionic emulsifier (B) containing a sulfur atom in a proportion of from 3 to 5 parts by weight based on 100 parts by weight of the whole of the monomer components constituting the acrylic polymer (A)."

Thus, claim 6 is directed to an embodiment where the amount of anionic emulsifier within the surface portion (i.e., within up to 3 nm from the outer surface) of the PSA layer based on 100 parts by weight of the acrylic polymer (A) in the surface portion of the PSA layer and the total amount of anionic emulsifier in the aqueous dispersion PSA composition that

forms the PSA layer is 3-5 parts by weight based on 100 parts by weight of the whole of the monomer components constituting the acrylic polymer (A). That is, claim 3 further defines the total amount of anionic emulsifier in the entire PSA layer, including the surface portion (i.e., portion up to 3 μm from the outer surface). Accordingly, claim 6 is consistent with claim 1 and further limits claim 1.

In view of the above, it is submitted that claims 3, 5 and 6 are definite and that one of skill in the art would understand the meaning and scope of the claims.

Since the claims comply with §112, second paragraph, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

II. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below. The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

/Keiko K. Takagi/
Keiko K. Takagi
Registration No. 47,121

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

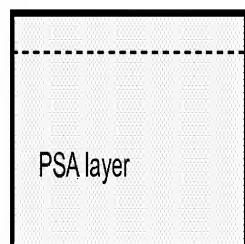
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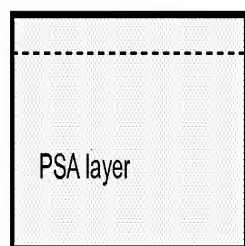
Claim 1



} 3nm: anionic emulsifier 0.1-3 parts/monomer 100 parts

*) "part(s)" means "part(s) by weight".

Claim 3

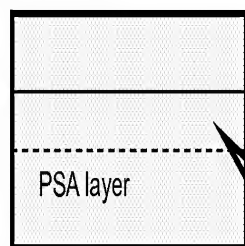


} 3nm: anionic emulsifier 0.1-3 parts/monomer 100 parts

anionic emulsifier 0.5-5 parts/monomer 100 parts

Amount of anionic emulsifier in the whole of the PSA layer is also limited

Claim 5



} Outermost layer (thickness: 1-5μm): anionic emulsifier 0.1-3 parts/monomer 100 parts

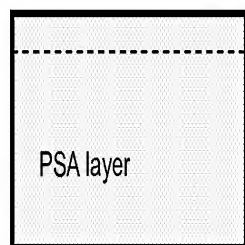
Limited to multilayered structure

In addition to the recitation in claim 1 (3nm: anionic emulsifier 0.1-3 parts/monomer 100 parts), the amount of the anionic emulsifier in the outermost layer having a thickness of 1-5μm is further specified.

anionic emulsifier 0.5-5 parts/monomer 100 parts

Amount of anionic emulsifier in the whole of the PSA layer is also limited

Claim 6



} 3nm: anionic emulsifier 0.1-3 parts/monomer 100 parts

This recitation should be deleted since it is already recited in claim 1.

anionic emulsifier 3-5 parts/monomer 100 parts

Amount of anionic emulsifier in the whole of the PSA layer is also limited